

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAIGON 08577 151236 Z

44

ACTION SCI-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

AGR-20 COA-02 EB-11 COME-00 AID-20 INT-08 HEW-08

NAS-01 NSF-04 RSR-01 /159 W
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R 151045 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1703

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TGEN, EFIS, MILI, BEXP, VS

SUBJECT: HERBICIDES: ALLEGED POISONING OF VIETNAMESE SEAFOOD
PRODUCTS

REF: A. SAIGON 7499

B. SAIGON 7916

C. TOKYO 5558

1. DR. PHAM HOANG HO OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SAIGON WHO SURFACED
PROBLEM OF DIOXIN CONTAMINATION IN VIETNAMESE SEAFOOD PRODUCTS
(REFTEL A) HAS PROVIDED EMBASSY FOLLOWING CLARIFICATION (INFORMAL
TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH). " IT IS CORRECT THAT THE DETAILS CON-
CERNING DIOXIN CONTAMINATION COME FORM THE BAUGHMAN- MESELSON
REPORT. BUT IT IS INCORRECT TO SAY THAT THEIR RESEARCH INDICATES
ONLY A METHOD FOR MEASURING THE DOSAGE OF THIS SUBSTANCE. THE
REPORT INDICATES ALSO DOSAGE FOUND IN VARIOUS FISH AND SHELL FISH
IN THE CAN GIO REGION. EVERYONE KNOWS THAT THE FISH AND SHELL FISH
FROM CAN GIO ARE CAUGHT OFF SHORE, THAT IS TO SAY AT SEA. THE
DOSAGES DISCOVERED ARE QUITE ALARMING: ALMOST TWICE THE LETHAL
DOSE IN GUINEA PIGS. IN THE REFERENCED REPORT, IN ADDITION TO THE
TERATOLOGICAL INFLUENCES OBSERVED IN ANIMALS, THE AUTHORS HAVE
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 08577 151236 Z

CITED EXPERIMENTS ON MONKEYS WHERE DIOXIN ACCUMULATE PROGRESSIVELY UP TO THE MORTAL DOSE. SINCE THIS INFORMATION AFFECTS DIRECTLY THE HEALTH OF MILLIONS OF MY FELLOW COUNTRYMEN, I AM DUTY BOUND TO INFORM THEM. WE HAVE WRITTEN TO PROFESSOR MELELSON AND TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO TO ASK THEM TO MAKE NEW ANALYSES OF THE SAMPLES THAT WE SHALL SEND."

2. EMBASSY IN REFTEL B REQUESTED DEPARTMENT EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF CONDUCTING TESTS IN U. S. WITH CURRENT VIETNAMESE SAMPLES. REFTEL C INDICATES JAPANESE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES PROCEEDING WITH ANALYSES OF CURRENT SAMPLES THROUGH MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE AND THE NATIONAL SANITATION LABORATORY, RATHER THAN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO AS MENTIONED BY DR. HO.

3 . ACTION REQUESTED:

IN VIEW OF MANDATE GIVEN BY CONGRESS TO NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES TO REVIEW THE EFFECTS OF USE OF HERBICIDE, IT IS SUGGESTED THAT NAS HERBICIDE COMMITTEE BE REQUESTED TO SEND QUALIFIED SCIENTIST TO SAIGON TO COLLECT REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLES FOR ANALYSIS UNDER NAS AUSPICES AND TO CONFER WITH DR. HO AND OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES. ASSUMING EXPERTISE IN TECHNIQUES ELABORATED IN BAUGHMAN-MESELSON REPORT, WE SUGGEST IT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL FOR AMERICAN SCIENTIST REPRESENTING NAS COMMITTEE TO CONFER IN JAPAN WITH NATIONAL SANITATION LABORATORY AND UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO EXPERTS. WHITEHOUSE

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